The Seed Sower.

A Magazine for the Church, the School, and the Home.

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Sunshine.

Sunshine! Oh, how glorious
Is thy welcome ray,
Light in might victorious;
Sunshine! round us stay.
Heaven above is shining,
Earth beneath is fair;
Joy and gladness reigning,
Sunshine everywhere.
Sunshine! Oh, how glorious
Is thy welcome ray,
Light in might victorious;
Sunshine! round us stay.

Just so sweet is sunshine
In the world of Home;
There should gloom and tempest
Never, never come.
There should gladsome voices
Echo loving smiles,
As each heart rejoices,
And love pain beguiles.
Sunshine! Oh, how glorious, etc.

Call we, then, the spirits
From the vasty deep,
Who bring true heart-gladness,
Not who frown and weep.
Come they lightly, brightly,
Through our open door,
Angel-matins singing,
"Rejoice for everymore."
Sunshine! Oh, how glorious, etc.

S. GREG.

Summer Sunshine.

"Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun."

Do you wonder that men have worshipped and still worship the sun? It is such a magnificent symbol of Deity that men have mistaken it for Deity itself. "The sun is God," said Turner, the great painter, a few weeks before he died, with the setting rays of it on his face. He meant, as Zoroaster meant, that the sun is the image of the source of all light and beauty. Never has an artist painted sunshine so gloriously as Turner. Mirabeau, as he lay on his death-bed and watched the rising of the sun, said, "If it is not God it is at least His cousin-german." It is not simply that we owe to the sun nearly all our physical blessings, light, life, warmth, colour, vegetation, but that it expresses for us the inexpressible realities of the spiritual world. Ruskin writes, "You cannot love the real sun, that is to say physical light and colour unless you love the spiritual, that is to say justice and truth rightly." One may almost say that the sun exists that man might have a symbol and image of God.

Is there anything more beautiful in Nature than summer sunshine? How the earth laughs

in its beams! How hill and valley, sea and sky break forth into singing, and put on holiday attire when the summer sun is in the heavens! The flowers open their bosoms to its warmth; the leaves of the forest spread themselves out and clap their hands for joy in its brightness. All earth and heaven are gay. How exhilarating are the wind-borne waves with the sunshine on their crests, purple and blue, green and silver-grey, all mingling together in a feast of colour! The skylark springs up to catch the glory of the sunshine in its song, and the flowers worship their Lord in the heavens. Day by day the sunshine, a river of life, pours itself out upon all creation, to light up worlds or wake an insect's mirth. Nothing in its eyes is mean or low or beneath its ministry; it seeks out and warms the cold worm in its loveless clod; it transforms the rippled sands into a sea of mimic gold; it is the plaything of the child and the sweet comfort of old age.

For the sun is dear even when the long shadows fall.
Forth to the sunshine the old man doth crawl,
Close by the door, no further, in his chair
The old man sits; and sitteth there
His soul within him, like a child that is
Half-drowsy, with his half-shut eyes,
At close of a long afternoon in summer.

The sun is the universal painter flinging a thousand hues and shades upon those great canvases, earth and sky and sea. Silently, ardently, and for ever he works, and every beam of his dispenses influences far and wide, varied and powerful. It is the emblem of Truth and all moral excellence.

But chiefly the sun is the bringer of joy, the author of smiles and gladness, the inspiration of song. Note the difference here between light and sunshine. Light may be with us without sunshine. On a dismal, murky day, when there is no sun to be seen and no blue in the sky, the light is with us, veiled, dimmed, but still present. How many sunless days, as we say, have we in this climate of ours; weeks together when the pall of grey clouds prevent us from seeing the sun in the heavens? Yet we have light, light enough for our work, our journey, and our necessities. But sunshine is light with a smile in it, light with a song in it, light with gladness in it. See from a hill top the wide and varied landscape in the dull light of a day without sunshine, and see the same landscape when the clouds are packed away and the sun rides gloriously on high. Is it the same? Yes; the mountains are there the same, and the fields, forests, and rivers, and the blowing clover and the distant sea. But it is all glorified, no longer sad and depressing, but rich and rejoicing.

"Thou coveredst Thyself with light as with a garment." Truly there is something divine in light; men have not been wrong in thinking it an especial pattern and likeness of God. For light is an emblem of Wisdom; it sees into everything, searches everything; it is also an emblem of Revelation, for it shows us everything; without light our eyes would be useless. But sunshine is something more than light. If we had light only we should use it as a parable of Truth, Wisdom, and Revelation. Sunshine, however, is more; it is a parable of Love and Joy, of the soul's gladness and the soul's beauty. The bright, warm, genial, friendly sunshine sends its message to the immaterial life of the soul. It is not so hard to be in a kindly mood when the sunshine pours itself down, a golden flood, into the lap of the earth. The sunny temper!—how could we speak of it but for the image we have of it in the summer sunshine!

For the whole of Nature is a sacrament, the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual life; and there is not a sight or sound of these summer days that is not a symbol to us both of God and man, of some touch of divine or human beauty, and some phase of divine or human joy. We walk with God when we walk with an open heart in the sunshine.

Transfer this to the human and spiritual world. Have we not known people who carry sunshine about with them? It is pleasant to be in their company; we ourselves feel kind and gracious when they are with us. These sunshiny friends are some of our most precious treasures. They exhilarate us; they revive our courage, reinforce our strength in weariness, quiet us when we are restless and agitated. Most of us know people of a different sort; people who not intentionally but under the influence of some fatal east wind of the soul, always remember for us the things which it would be pleasant to forget, and always speak of the things of which we wish they would be silent; people who have a talent for misery; who are dull themselves and make

others dull; who when the sun is rising in the east, and the fresh, pure light of day is beginning to dawn, resolutely look westwards, where the heavy clouds of night are still hanging in funeral gloom; and who when the west is beaming with the gorgeous splendours of sunset, resolutely look eastwards, where the grey twilight is ascending like the shadowy ghost of departing day. They act as human refrigerators; they are cold themselves and they lower the temperature for others. If we see them coming in at the front door it requires a great deal of grace not to snatch up one's hat and quietly slip out at the back window.

But the sunshiny people—how glad we are to see them, the people whose coming in to a room is like a band of music or a breath of roses. They soften the hard and rude into love and kindness; they brighten into some show of cheerfulness even Mrs. Gummidge! How sweet is the home where the sunlight of good temper shines! "For good temper is the result of a well-ordered character, in which each quality is so *tempered* as to act harmoniously with the rest, and ministers to the rightful and easy activity of the whole. It may be born with a man in whom the elements from the first are kindly mixed; but for the most part it has to be won. Now, we can only win it by the daily sacrifice of the impulsive, impertinent, and selfish demands of our different appetites and passions to be first. Sometimes one, sometimes another, attempts to rule and master the rest. Our business, watching over our own character, is to keep each claimant in its place, that there be no despotism of one power over the rest, but that all are co-operant to one end—the service of others. Whenever that temper is acquired there is sunshine in the home."

* * * * * * *

There may be light, but without the thought of God and God's love there will be no sunshine. Sunshine of soul blesses the man who rejoices in God's friendship, who runs to Him in trouble for His smile, who in deepest outward darkness is still sure of God. That consciousness will make sunshine in a man's heart always, fairer than the morning, lovelier than eventide.

You may have the light of knowledge, the light of duty, the light of reason, the light of stoical endurance, without the consciousness of God; but you will not have joy, you will not have sunshine. That comes with the faith that

> God's in His heaven,
> All's right with the world.

Look at the contrast between two noble men, one of whom lived in the light and the other in the sunshine. Read the meditations of Marcus Aurelius. It is one of the great religious books of the world. Marcus Aurelius was in many respects a great and lofty character. The circumstances of his birth placed him in an Imperial position, laying upon his shoulders the burden of a vast responsibility, and bidding him attempt the performance of duties too hard, too serious, for any single will. In other respects his was a trying lot cast in an anxious time. His colleague in the Empire was worthless; his son and successor a disgrace to humanity; scandal busied itself with his wife's fair fame; storm, pestilence, earthquake, united to persuade a superstitious people that the gods had abandoned Rome; he spent a large part of his reign in inglorious frontier wars. But if his policy is often to us obscure, we know well his mind and heart. We owe to the hours in which he retired to the solitude of his tent, and there questioned his own soul, a self-drawn picture of a singularly noble nature, and which no lapse of time can dim the interest. There is not a trace of boastful egotism in it; the lines are few and of severe simplicity; a genuine humility breathes through it all, as becomes a man, who, Emperor though he be, feels the perpetual presence of more august realities than those of his throne, and of a power more stable. He is calm, patient, upright, enduring, seeing all things in the clear light of reason and duty.

But while there is light, there is no sunshine. Mark how sad it all is—a noble sadness, it is true, but still sadness. No irrepressible note of joy breaks through here, no gleam of gladness that will not be denied rests on the page. Fate tried him severely, and he met the blows of fate with a quiet courage and a steady patience which are beyond all praise. Yet it is plain that life is a burden to him. It is true no word of complaint escapes him; he is full of love and gratitude to his friends; he will leave no duty unfulfilled. But he has no joy in life; it is stoicism at its best, but it is not sunshine, and he is glad when the release

comes, and he can slip his neck out of the yoke at nightfall, like a tired ox that has toiled all day in the furrow. He had no sunshine for he had no trust in a Father's love.

Now look at Paul, with a lot harder far than that of Marcus Aurelius. Persecuted, betrayed, imprisoned, flogged, deserted by companions, homeless, frail in body, sensitive in spirit, with no touch of stoicism in his nature, and with woes enough to fill the cups of a hundred men. But is he crushed and wretched and overcome? Hark to the notes of gladness:—"Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice." "In everything give thanks." "Rejoice evermore." He talks about "joy and peace in believing." He will not have his friends sorrow on his behalf. He writes a noble hymn in praise of love. His heart throbs with gratitude. All is well since God's love and care enfold him. All things work together for good. In all these things—these experiences of pain, privation, distress, persecution, he is "more than conqueror." He does not painfully *endure* life, he enjoys it. His letters are full of exhilaration and his days are lived in sunshine. Borne up and borne on by belief in the unspeakable wisdom and tenderness of God's love, he dwells in sunshine and, in turn, sheds it abroad. The Roman had light, but Paul had light with a smile in it, light with a song in it. The keynote of such a life is not duty, nor resignation, nor stoicism, but joyous surrender to God, an exalted belief that nothing can separate him from the love of God. For in God Himself, from whom we come, to whom we go, is the eternal, supreme, unchangeable Sunshine of Love.

J. W.

Pruning the old Theological Tree.

Around the fundamental and essential elements of the popular faith, many exotic dogmas have clustered, which, like parasitic growths, have choked and hidden the true ideals, and have indeed usurped the name and functions of religion. Many of these excrescences are gradually dying from inanition; or the healthy breezes of clearer, fresher thought are blowing them into dust and ashes. We note a few of these moribund ideas, which have all been considerable factors in establishing and maintaining present society, with the verdicts which the newer science and philosophy have pronounced upon them.

That religion largely consists in participating in certain ecclesiastical rites, in reading certain books, in repeating certain words, in observing certain days, in diverting the streams of life from their natural channels of thought and action.

The newer thought is,—that such things are not religion at all; that religion essentially means, the best, fullest use of all the powers and faculties of life, the growth of good thoughts in the heart, the issue of sweet words from clean lips, and the doing of right actions, helpful to others well-being. It recognises all times and seasons as equally sacred, as every spot upon the earth is equally, with every other spot, a presence-chamber of the Great King; and that the common life of man, its everyday business, its natural relationships, its duties and responsibilities, is the true sphere of religion.

That men are divided into praise-worthy and blame-worthy, not on the basis of character, but of belief.

It is generally now held that beliefs are formed in men's minds by what are, in their judgments, the strongest evidence; acknowledged authority being ever a powerful influence in so moulding the judgment. That the beliefs being thus necessary and unavoidable, there can be no merit in holding one kind of opinions, nor demerit in holding others. But it is for men's ultimate advantage that they hold true opinions.

That virtue and vice have other foundations or significance than their connection with human well-being.

The old systems of ethics, based upon the idea that good and bad were absolute, not relative terms, are now challenged. It is maintained that virtue means the condition of mind and character leading to conduct, which, not perhaps in its immediate or apparent consequences, but in its inter-action with the many ramifications of life, will ultimately promote human happiness; and that vice is the condition of mind generating conduct, which, although perhaps giving present gratification to others besides the man himself,—will ultimately tend to produce human misery and social disorder.

That human life, forming but a fractional portion of man's existence, its concerns are comparitively unimportant.

The newer thought about human life is, that it is the very greatest thing in the universe of which we have any definite knowledge. We may surmise,—have faith in and aspirations towards, — something higher, grander, more abiding; but man's earthly life is the only foundation on which a social fabric can be built. Man is, as we see and know him, the noblest and most complete outcome of creative energy of which we are cognizant; it may be that there is no more perfected form of life and intelligence in the universe. When we say of such a one, he was merely a man! what does that *merely* include? An illimitable grasp of knowledge, illimitable powers of love, without any limits in his thoughts and aspirations. The problem, how to live his life *well*, is the highest that can be placed before sage or philosopher, the man of science or the religious devotee.

That man is naturally depraved, ever more inclined towards evil than good.

This strange hypothesis, — devoid of any scientific basis, contrary to instinct and experience, and uncorroborated by any analogy in nature, has evidently been brought in to fill up a gap in systematized theology. We know that in common life, for every evil word or act, there are a hundred good words or acts. The smiles and prattle of childhood,—"of such the Kingdom of Heaven,"—the love of woman, the fidelity of friendship, the patriot in the dungeon, the philanthropist in the lazar-house, the persistence through toils and privations in every-day work and duty, nay the courtesies of common life all attest the predominance of good over evil in human life.

That the maintenance of a priestly caste is essential to religion.

As, when the first king assumed the insignia of authority, and asserted his leadership of the nation,—so, when the first priest put on his sacerdotal robes, and took his place at the altar of sacrifice, speaking the words which none other must utter,—a big event for both weal and woe was inaugurated in human history. The King and the priest have ever been important factors in society. Nowadays, the doctrine that all men have equal claims to social regard,— and equal claims in the measure of their fitness and capacity to social position amongst their fellows,—is fast obtaining general recognition. The world, the country, the commune will always have their formost men; there will ever be leaders and teachers in society. But these will hold their places in the future, not by the accident of birth, or the laying on of other men's hands, but more and more the best men, —the men of larger capacity, of greater wisdom, of wider sympathy, will be chosen for, or rather, will naturally fall into, these foremost places.

That laws of right and wrong, which men have formed from experience, and the lights of reason and of conscience, and which are applicable in their mutual relations, are inapplicable in what has come to be called "sacred history," and in juaging of what is declared to be "divine."

When complex and extensive measurement has to be done, as in the Ordnance Survey of Great Britian, all aids from science and art are brought into requisition to lay down *one exact mile*. From a mile so laid down at Blackwall, every field, and every distance from point to point in the triangulations of England, were measured. Nay, more, that mile has been projected into the very heavens. The diameters of the sun and of all the planets, the distances of the moon from the earth and of the planets from the sun, the velocity at which *Sirius* is retreating from the earth, the velocity at which the Solar system is moving towards the constellation *Hercules*, and the velocities of sound and light, are all in terms of that Blackwall mile. A man can apply only his earthly-formed ideas of right and justice to things called "sacred," to things appertaining to the highest heavens. It is with him *this* criterion, or none.*

That, under certain conditions and through certain instrumentalities, the natural laws may be broken.

Man's whole personal experience is of infrangible, changeless law. All of science is founded on the assumption that, at all times and in all places, like causes will produce like effects. The order, the stability of the universe, hangs upon this certainty; otherwise than this would

*Dr. Edwin A. Abbot wrote recently in the *Literary World*:— "Many, out of a false sense of reverence, say in effect: 'God's justice may be altogether different from our justice; we are incapable of judging or testing it.' Such people may consistently go on to say: 'God's love is altogether different from ours;' and so of the rest of his attributes; finally, reducing our Father in heaven to an unknown quantity, an algebraic *x*. We say, instead, 'God's justice must be more just and more merciful than the most just and the most merciful human justice.'"

be disorder, chaos. We must have a mean idea indeed of the Infinite Wisdom, if we can imagine that, to prove the truth of some proposition, which was capable of proof by experiment, or by reason and argument, there had to be recourse to such incongruous procedure as breaking the continuity of natural laws. As essentially a portion of the universe, man is, in every grain of his constitution, in all his attributes, the subject of law, as much as is the fall of a stone, or the liquefaction of water. In every phase of his being certain effects will necessarily be evolved from certain conditions, and it is on this certainty that the higher hopes of mankind are founded.

And to our list of quasi-religious dogmas, which have been factors in moulding social life, but which the broadened thought of the present age is quietly passing by, we may add this other: That the more sacred times, and tne more important events in human history, occurred in the far past, and in distant lands. The newer faith is, that the Infinite goodness and mercy are as near to us, as present with us to-day, here, in this England of ours, as they were in burning bush, in Sinai thunderings, or between the wings of the cherubims in the temple holy of holies; and that the events and the life-conditions of to-day are, to the men and women now living upon the earth, the most significant and inportant of all within the range of human history. D. MAXWELL.

Guild News.

EXAMINERS' REPORTS ON PRIZE ESSAYS.

We gave last month the names of the successful competitors in each of the three subjects. It will be interesting to all who are interested in this branch of Guild work to read the remarks of two of the examiners on the general aspects of the essays submitted.

The Examiner of the essays on "Channing's Perfect Life" writes:—"I have received five essays on 'Dr. Channing's Perfect Life.' All five are to be highly commended. In every case it is clear that the writer has carefully read all the sermons, and has entered into their meaning. Three of the essayists practically confine themselves to giving a careful painstaking abstract of Channing's work. The other two, while, of course, they give something of an analysis of the whole, show also a power of grasping the general idea and teaching of the book, which makes them, in my judgment, superior to the other three. The first aim of the examiner in setting such a book as the subject of an essay is to make the essayist well-acquainted with its teaching and spirit. This aim has been successful in the case of *all* the essayists. The second aim would be to stimulate individual thought and feeling, to call out powers of comparison, of criticism, and to encourage the capacity for dealing with a subject as a whole. This has not been so fully understood or attained by all. In some of the essays the personality of the writer is practically unseen. I should like to have seen more of the personal convictions and judgment of the essayists united with the excellent impersonal analysis which they give."

Of the essays on "The Life and Times of Priestley," the Examiner reports:—"It has been a great pleasure to me to examine the nine Guild essays on 'Dr. Priestley.' They have all been written carefully, and, in the matter of facts and dates, they are marked by almost entire accuracy. Class preparation at the Guild meeting, or private reading at home, have evidently stimulated that interest in the subject which it is the chief aim of the Prize Essay Scheme to promote. The first four papers in order of merit are distinctly deserving of credit, and their difference in marks was not great. In addition to giving correct book-information, they testify to some personal thinking, and indicate the essayist's own impression of Priestley's motives and disposition. It is the absence of this personal estimate, rather than mistakes of fact, which places the other papers lower down on the list. There was also a rather wide disparity of age and attainments among the writers."

Consecration.

From a paper read at the Annual Meeting of the Guilds' Union, by Miss Tremain.

It may be noted that there is a disposition to-day to think less of sacred associations; less reverence for the past is shown; nothing seems free from the intrusion of debate. Happily there is a counter-balancing tendency to apply the idea of consecration more and more to our daily life, and to make all times, places, and occupations sacred. Thus the conception that a consecrated life must be lived apart from the world and its temptations becomes less and less prevalent. A contemplative life spent in devotion does not appeal to the religious people of to-day. Asceticism is becoming less common, and the people who imagine that they are better Christians for abstaining from all worldly business and pleasure, and leading solitary lives of privation and self-mortification, are fewer in number than formerly. The idea of an ascetic life being a holy one was at a very early time associated with the Christian religion. The Nazarites and Essenes were orders that practised Asceticism when Christianity was quite new to the world; but it attained its greatest prevalence in the third century when the people of Syria flocked in thousands and tens of thousands to the deserts and hills to lead the lives of hermits and recluses. From this aspect of solitary, penetential life the notion of associating into groups or orders those who were willing to practice this restrained, one-sided life, suggested the formation of monasteries and nunneries, which have for 14 or 1500 years received

vast numbers of men and women who might otherwise have done greater and better work in the world. And this conception of an ascetic life, being a desirable one, is not confined to the Christian religion, Buddhism and many other religions have exhibited similar traits.

But men and women are gradually beginning to see that for religion to have any practical value it must walk hand in hand with every-day duties and pleasures; that, in fact, we must consecrate, that is devote to the service of God and Humanity, our common life.

When thinking of more modern exponents of the doctrine of self-consecration ones mind turns almost instinctively to that beautiful hymn by Frances R. Havergal, so well known to most of us:—

Take my life, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to thee;
Take my moments and my days,
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my voice, and let me sing
Always, only for my King;
Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages from thee.

Take my silver and my gold,
Not a mite would I withhold;
Take my intellect, and use
Every power as thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it thine;
It shall be no longer mine;
Take my heart, it is thine own;
It shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour
At thy feet its treasure store;
Take myself, and I will be
Ever, only, all for thee.

In spite of its beauty, I have heard this hymn objected to as being unsuitable for a general assembly, because it rises to a greater height of self-renunciation or self-consecration than everybody can aspire to, and that consequently its frequent and indiscriminate use would tend to encourage hypocrisy and insincerity. The lines—"Take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold," is, I think, the one to which these objections were aimed, many people regarding it as quite impractical, and professing more than they could perform. But, after all, it is the spirit rather than the letter that we must look at. And the tendency of modern thought in this direction is rather to lay stress on the desirability of carefully scrutinising the methods by which we get our money, and of endeavouring when we have got it to spend it wisely and well, than to shirk the responsibility which wealth always brings together with its privileges.

It is very probable that a little poem by Whittier will appeal more generally to us, and very aptly express the views of a great majority on this subject:

Hast thou, 'midst life's empty noises,
Heard the solemn steps of Time,
And the low, mysterious voices
Of another clime?

Early hath life's mighty question
Thrilled within thy heart of youth,
With a deep and strong beseeching—
What, and where, is Truth?

Not to ease and aimless quiet
Doth the inward answer tend;
But to works of love and duty,
As our being's end.

Not to idle dreams and trances,
Folded hands and solemn tone;
But to faith, in daily striving,
And performance shown.

Earnest toil and strong endeavour
Of a spirit which within
Wrestles with familiar evil,
And besetting sin.

And without, with tireless vigour,
Steady heart and purpose strong,
In the power of Truth assaileth
Every form of wrong.

Most of our Guilds have a practical side to their programme in which the earnestness of our consecration to the cause of God and Humanity can find ample expression in practical work among our fellow men and women. Such work as the entertainment of the needy and afflicted, taking of flowers to the sick, the providing of summer rambles and country holidays for poor children, the distribution of literature and the promotion of temperance, are only a few of the many ways by which we may show our devotion to the cause we all have at heart. And we need not repine at the smallness of our service; if we do it heartily it serves its purpose as well as more ambitious endeavour. As the Rev. W. Gannett very beautifully expresses it: "It is the angel aim and standard in an act that consecrates it. He who aims for perfectness in a trifle is trying to do that trifle holily. . . . . It is not how great a thing we do, but how well we do the thing we have to, that puts us in the noble brotherhood of artists. My Real is not my Ideal,—is *that* my complaint? One thing at least is in my power: if I cannot realise my Ideal, I can at least *idealise my Ideal.* How? By trying to be perfect in it. If I am but a rain drop in a shower, I will be at least a perfect drop; if but a leaf in a whole June, I will be at least a perfect leaf. This 'one thing I do,' and instead of repining at its lowness or its hardness, I will make it glorious by my supreme loyalty to its demand."

To be true, to hate every form of falsehood, to live a brave, true, real life,—that is to love God. God is infinite; and to love the boundless, reaching on from grace to grace, adding charity to faith, and rising upward ever to see the ideal still above us, and to die with it unattained, aiming insatiably to be perfect even as the Father is perfect,—that is to love God.—*F. W. Robertson.*

Heroes of Philanthropy.

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

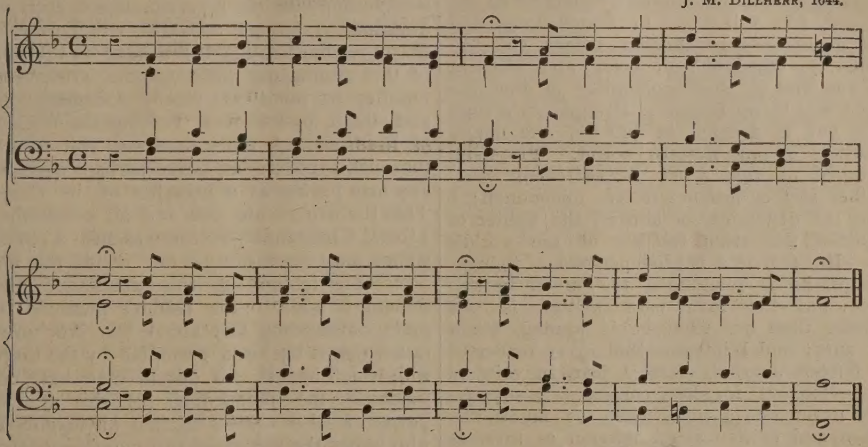
On the 29th July, 1833, there died at Highwood Hill, "within the disk of London," one of the greatest philanthropists the world has ever known. William Wilberforce, born in 1759, was a man of singularly engaging personality, "handsome and witty, and yet a friend." The lay leader of the Evangelical School in religion, he had none of the narrowness and gloom usually associated with that type of thought at the end of the 18th century. "The charm of his character enabled him to take the part of moral censor without being morose." Though profoundly convinced of the root doctrine of evangelical theology, the corruption of human nature in general, his biographers says of him that he loved every particular human being. In modern language he would have been called "humanitarian." While taking a keen interest in all the political and social conditions of the day, and was often called in to advise or arbitrate, he devoted himself to one great subject—the abolition of the trade in slaves. He was for forty years the Parliamentary leader of the Anti-Slavery Party, and although he did not live to see the abolition of slavery within the British dominions, he led the way towards that great achievement by carrying in 1807 an Act by which the trade in slaves from Africa was made illegal. Entering the House of Commons in 1780, as member for Hull (election expenses £9000!), he became greatly attached to Pitt, an attachment which ripened into a close personal friendship, and was thus enabled to secure Pitt's adherence to the great cause. The year 1785 marked a great crisis in his life. Under the influence of Dr. Isaac Milner, and after a careful study of Dr. Doddridge's "Rise and Progress of Religion," he became a convert to Evangelical Christianity. In the same year Thomas Clarkson's prize essay on the slave trade was published, and immediately appealed to the new convert. Clarkson, Zachary Macauly, Granville Sharp, and other leaders of the anti-slavery movement, all belonged to the Clapham sect, and they welcomed with open arms the new recruit both to their religious views and their great propaganda. The first bill for the abolition of the slave trade was thrown out by the House of Commons in 1791 by 163 to 88. After many difficulties and delays, the bill was carried by the Lower House in June, 1804, but rejected by the House of Lords. In three years, however, it became the law of the land, and one great sin of the English nation came to an end. After this he took up a yet more difficult task—the conversion of the English people to the idea of setting free every slave on British soil. To this Wilberforce gave up his life, and happily did not pass away until he saw the end in sight. Ill-health caused his retirement, in 1825, from the House of Commons, but his labours for freedom never ceased. On his death, Parliament unanimously authorised his burial in Westminster Abbey.

A true perception of the gospel is the entire forgetfulness of self, utter absence of any pretension, and the complete and entire refusal to accept the world's praise or judgment.—*General Gordon.*

A Family Hymn.

BY OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES.

J. M. DILLHERR, 1644.



1. Thou gracious God, Whose mercy lends
The light of home, the smile of friends,
Our gathered flock Thine arms enfold,
As in the peaceful days of old.

2. Wilt Thou not hear us while we raise,
In sweet accord of solemn praise,
The voices that have mingled long
In joyous flow of mirth and song?

3. For all the blessings life has brought,
For all its sorrowing hours have taught,
For all we mourn, for all we keep,
The hands we clasp, the loved that sleep,

4. The noontide sunshine of the past,
These brief, bright moments, fading fast,
The stars that gild our darkening years,
The twilight ray from holier spheres,

5. We thank Thee, Father; let Thy grace
Our loving circle still embrace,
Thy mercy shed its heavenly store,
Thy peace be with us evermore.

The Liberal Movement.

BY REV. L. P. JACKS.

The address given at the Whit-week meetings by the Editor of the *Hibbert Journal* on "The Tendencies of Modern Religious Thought" deserves careful reading by all who are interested in the trend and progress, in the break-up and re-construction of Religious doctrine. The address will doubtless be published in a permanent form. We have only space for one extract here. Speaking of lessons taught by editing the *Hibbert Journal*, Mr. Jacks said:—"No one who has had the experience we have had during the last three years would be inclined to doubt that religion is now, as it always has been, the dominant interest of the human mind. Whosoever has a word of true religion to speak to this age and generation may confidently expect that a swift and eager response will follow his appeal. If the word that we speak fails to evoke a response, we may be very sure that in the deepest and truest sense it is not a religious word. Religious words, as far as my experience goes, are comparatively rare. Words about religion, which are a very different kind of thing, are as the sand on the sea-shore for multitude. If you want a religion weighed, estimated, criticised, compared with other religions, and assigned its own place and order in the evolution of religion, you have only to give the sign, and a hundred eager minds will be ready to do the business. But when you want a religious idea

expounded by one who can speak at first hand of its inner meaning, not merely repeating catchwords of his environment, but giving you the living outcome of his own thought and experience, you will have to search long, and meet many disappointments before you encounter the object of your quest; and, when at last you find it, the probability is that the author will be no Doctor of Divinity in a high place, but a dweller in one of the many Nazareths of our modern world. Prophetic utterance of that kind is extremely rare. Another sort of prophet is less uncommon; I mean the denouncer of abuses, the hunter of iniquities, the stern rebuker of the world's sins. He, too, is a needed personage, though, perhaps, he is sometimes too much in evidence; but the man *most* wanted is one mightier than he. That he is wanted, I am very sure; and I imagine that every reader of the *Hibbert Journal*, often, I fear, in vain, is on the lookout for his coming. I suppose there never was a time when so much was spoken and written about religion as there is now. It is a genuine source of wonder to me that religion has not been talked out of existence ere now. If any other concern of man had been subject to such incessant analysis and discussion it would by this have lost all vital interest for the human mind. That religion has suffered from this cause I do not doubt; she has been cheapened by it in the eyes of many; that she still survives is the proof of her eternal vitality. She lives, and never was more alive. But her life is inarticulate and formless. There is a religion not found in the lives of the churches; not expressed in the books of the theologians—a vast amorphous energy blindly struggling in the million hearts of the people, waiting for an interpreter who has long delayed his coming, but who may come, or should I say may 'return,' at any hour. This is the conclusion to which I have been brought anew in recent years. To trace the steps by which I reach it would not interest you. But my growing belief that these things are so fills me with hope and good cheer for the future."

"What do you hope for above everything else in the world?" You are judged by the answer you give to that question.

Torreyism.*

After pursuing his career of slander with strange impunity for a year in this country, the notorious American revivalist, Dr. Torrey, has drawn retribution upon his head in the shape of this courageous little volume, written by a number of ministers, chiefly Congregational, and edited by the Rev. T. Rhondda Williams, of Bradford. A more deserved and a more thorough exposure has never perhaps overtaken any man posing as a preacher of the Gospel. That the writers are one and all adherents of Liberal Christianity, welcome as such a circumstance must be, is not to our minds the most noticeable feature of this manifesto, much though it adds to the reader's pleasure; the main, outstanding fact about this brochure is rather that it has been prompted by the disgust with which honest and decent men have been watching the proceedings of this itinerant bearer of false witness against his neighbours, who unites the narrowest and most mischievous theology with a license of misrepresentation truly appalling.

Whether in the gravely-reasoned pages of Dr. Anderson, of Dundee, who writes on "Revival and Intellectual Reaction;" or in the sledge-hammer arguments of the editor, who deals unsparingly with "Dr. Torrey's Treatment of the Bible," besides contributing an introduction and a final chapter; or, in the rapier-thrusts of the Rev. Hugh C. Wallace, of Bristol, who examines "Dr. Torrey's Controversial Method" and "Dr. Torrey as a Scholar"—all these utterances converge toward one point, bear witness to the same feeling, and the sum of it all is that the best religious life of to-day has no use for Torreyism, and averts its offended eyes from this spectacle of obscurantism and bigotry.

Whenever any criticism is pronounced either on the intellectual shortcomings of the type of Evangelism which Dr. Torrey represents, or on the recklessness of statement — to use a euphemism — which characterises him, the critic must prepare himself for being met with the triumphant rejoinder, "But look at

* "The True Revival *versus* Torreyism." Edited by the Rev. T. Rhondda Williams. London—Percy Lund, Humphries and Co. One Shilling net.

the conversions — four thousand in Bristol alone!" Should the critic be a Unitarian, the remark is generally added, more in pity than in anger, "Of course, you don't believe in conversions!" We certainly do not believe in conversions such as a Torrey mission produces, holding them to be generally the outcome of a morbid state of nervous excitement induced by the corybantic methods of revivalism; and we are glad to be able to cite the opinion of one of the contributors, Rev. David Dickie (Presbyterian), who thus expresses himself: "I have long regarded the *modus operandi* of these preachers as mischievous in the extreme. From first to last their methods are cleverly contrived to take the soul at a disadvantage. Throwing it off its balance, they keep it on the run, driving it from pillar to post, never suffering it to steady and settle itself, until through sheer exhaustion it holds out the white flag—surrenders, too often, to them and their tactics, and not to a better life." "I cannot help laying at their door," (Dr. Torrey's and Mr. Alexander's) says the same writer, "much of the lapsing and breaking away from the Churches. As for their successes in evangelistic endeavour, the one outstanding distinction seems to be unmitigated insolence. Whatever they may have to teach they certainly have much to learn in the matter of manners. Except in downright offensiveness, it is hard to see where their power comes in. So far as Dr. Torrey is concerned, his influence in Glasgow was simply nil. In no one way did he touch the city." A similar testimony is borne by the Rev. James Bell, of the same city; while Mr. Rhondda Williams hits the nail on the head when he says: "Missions get their testimonials much in the same way that patent medicines do—excited patients in moments of exhilaration write them, and though the patients afterwards fall back, the testimonials continue in circulation."

And this unfavourable verdict is based on fact and observation: "What of the conversions? The great majority mean no good for the after-life. In a Midland town not long ago a great mission wound up with the triumphant declaration of 500 converts. In three months thirty ministers, after due investigation, declared that these had melted away, and though they had all worked with the mission, they decided never to advocate another. A minister friend of the Editor received seventy converts from a mission into his church about two years ago; only five remain!"

Space forbids our quoting from Mr. Moncure Sime's warm-hearted repudiation of "Dr. Torrey's Idea of Eternal Torment"—an idea which this "Evangelist" (save the mark!) holds with such remarkable cheerfulness that, though he says the Revisers have "translated" (!) a certain word "Hades," yet, he exclaims with exultation, "There is plenty of Hell left in the text!" Mr. Sime, by the way, over-generously credits Dr. Torrey with having abandoned the old-fashioned notion of material torment. In this he is mistaken—we have before us a verbatim report of a sermon on "Hell," delivered by the revivalist quite recently, in which he distinctly speaks of "physical suffering of the intensest kind" as awaiting the damned.

While every one of the essays forming the little book is worth reading, we think the one possessing the most permanent value to be the Editor's lucid examination of Dr. Torrey's assertions regarding the infallibility of the Bible. Literalism quite so crude as that of this "theologue"—to give his own weird variant of the term—is not often met with nowadays; nevertheless, the "arguments" of Torreyism are those which are still at the back of a good many people's minds, and it is well to see them examined and dealt with in Mr. Williams' admirable manner. Nothing could be better than the following comment upon Dr. Torrey's admission of corruptions in the text from which the translations of the Bible was made: "What a grotesque picture of God this makes. First of all, he thinks it essential to give the world by miracle an infallible book, but not essential to secure infallible copyists. If knowledge of the Bible was to spread, it must be copied many times. What was the use of making the few writers of first manuscripts infallible, and putting their work into the hand of fallible copyists to send imperfect Bibles over the world? It seems a very poor arrangement. . . . What a pity that the superintendence of God, which extended [according to Dr. Torrey] down to 'words and the minutest shading of a word,' did not extend to the English Bible, the

only language the poor sceptic knew, who had not the advantage of sitting at Dr. Torrey's feet to learn Greek. What are the poor monoglot people to do, who are told they must believe in an infallible book and act accordingly, and yet do not possess an infallible translation of that book?" The studied simplicity of Mr. Williams' method will, we undertake to say, make his pages a peculiarly effective weapon against the literalism and Bibliolatry which Dr. Torrey is doing his worst to perpetuate.

But it is Mr. Wallace's lively pages that will perhaps prove most immediately damaging to this noisy revivalist, who has there poured into what Mr. Wallace calls his "alleged mind" such volleys of ridicule as can hardly fail to do their work. Especially happy is he in dealing with Dr. Torrey's tiresome and immodest claims to "scholarship"—claims which he continually makes as it were through a megaphone. When Dr. Torrey speaks of the parable of the Prodigal Son as "a drama of life in three acts," and declares that the "*dramatis personæ* of the drama are four — God, two men, and the Devil"—Mr. Wallace delicately hints at "a certain redundancy" in the phrase "*dramatis personæ* of the drama," which "sounds somewhat like speaking of 'Dr. Torrey's scholarship of Dr. Torrey,'" and confesses to having read the chapter in Luke without discovering the *dramatis personæ* enumerated by the Evangelist: "Our impression is that the 'cast' consist of a father and two sons." When Dr. Torrey describes the slaughter of the Canaanites as "an act of love and mercy," Mr. Wallace gravely reflects that "that enlightened and philanthropic monarch, Abdul Hamid, must deeply deplore the absence from the ranks of his clergy of a 'scholar' so well qualified as Dr. Torrey to justify his 'acts of love and mercy' to Armenia and Macedonia." And when the "evangelist" gives it as his opinion that "Unitarianism as a rule is not because of intellectual difficulties, but because of moral difficulties," his critic drily remarks, "In the light of this we have no hesitation in believing that *Torreyism is the outcome of intellectual difficulties*."

We cannot but think that the significance of this volume is in inverse ratio to its size. In the outspokenness of its protest against an obsolete theology and pernicious methods of religious propaganda, it shows that a new stage of development has been reached within the Evangelical Churches; and while we owe some gratitude to Dr. Torrey for having been the indirect means of eliciting so uncompromising a declaration, we cordially commend the little book to our own circle of readers, to be perused in its entirety. J. WARSCHAUER.

"Bible Lesson Notes on "The Religion of Jesus."

III.

THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF MAN.

Next to the question, What is God? no question so important as this, What is man? Is he an animal, or a spirit, or both? Is he a child of the devil, or a child of God? Observe the contradictory views: — "A little lower than the angels," says a Psalmist, while Isaiah says, "An unclean thing." A Roman orator spoke of man as "A god on earth," while a Greek poet said, "Man is the shadow of a dream." *Shakespeare*:— "What a piece of work is man," etc. *Byron*:— "Men are the sport of circumstances." (Weighty mottoes:—"Know thyself," "The proper study of man is man").

Generally speaking, there are two great and opposite notions of man and his nature, which may be called the Oriental and the Occidental, the Eastern and the Western. The Chinese, Hindoo, Arabic, roughly represent the Oriental; the Greek, the Roman, the Teuton, represent the Occidental. The Oriental a theory of self-contempt, the Occidental of self-respect; the one dwells on the insignificance of man, the other on his importance. A good deal of Christianity tries to combine the two.

Christ's doctrine of man is the doctrine of the West, and not the East; it teaches not the depravity, but the dignity of human nature. Man *as* man infinitely precious. How precious, see parables of lost sheep and lost piece of silver. Christ's doctrine of man is remarkable for what it does not teach. Christ says nothing about the origin of man, no word about Adam and Eve, or Garden of Eden. Says nothing about the story of man's creation in Genesis. Neither did Christ prophesy Darwin's account of man's origin. It was enough to find men here and to trace their origin up to God. Nor does Christ say anything on the origin of human evil, never mentions the Fall, or the Serpent, or the Apple. That old myth told of men's speculations as to how evil came into the world. Jesus never troubled himself about such speculations. Enough for him to trace evil to the human heart; not interested in

tracing it further. In the heart it must be met and conquered. So notice:—

1. His significant use of the word "heart." Symbol of man's inward spiritual life. Stood for the inward man—affection, conscience, will. Matt. v. 8, 28; vi. 21; xv. 8. Luke vi. 45. Great law of inwardness. Matt. xxiii. 26. Lays all the stress on a right condition of the heart, that is, the thoughts and feelings, and hopes and motives. If the man *within* is right, all his acts will be right.

2. His view of man's actual sinfulness. Did not take a rose-water sentimental view of life. Saw clearly the evil; faced the facts. While saying nothing about original sin, he marks the actual presence of sin. See how the word "repent" runs through the Gospel. Mark i. 18, vi. 12; Luke xv. 7. Forgiveness—Lord's prayer. The sin of man a palpable and terrible fact. No theory of its origin, but there is the fact. How to meet it?—How to overcome it? Repent.

3. His view of man's competence to discern truth. Throws men on Reason, not on Authority. Matt. xvi. 3; Luke xii. 57. Believed in human nature's capacity for truth—for perceiving it when presented. Flung his truth broadcast—gave it to simple folk, fishermen, shepherds, sinful women, certain that the human heart could understand the divinest things.

4. His view of man's capacity for good. No total depravity in his teaching. No gloomy conception of human nature. Men were to be, could be, like the Father in Heaven. Christ everywhere saw not only the sin in men, but the good in men also—Zaccheus, Nathanael, woman of Samaria. He redeemed men by showing that he believed in them.

IV.

CHRIST'S DOCTRINE OF SALVATION.

Christ called a "Saviour." But there are many saviours of men. One who persuades a drunkard to give up drink is that man's saviour: saves him from the misery, poverty, and degradation of drunkenness. Man saved by a gift or loan from bankruptcy. Child saved from drowning. Woman saved from gambling. But in these cases there may be no real change in character. Jesus a saviour not from particular offences, but from the inward root of all offences. Deeper than sins, he finds and attacks SIN. Works a change in the whole character. Jesus does not save from the natural consequences of sin, nor from its future punishment, but from sin itself. How?

(1) By showing the sufficiency of repentance. Prodigal son. (2) By the inspiration of his own example. Follow me. (3) By appealing to the good there is in man. (Zaccheus and the Magdalen). (4) By revealing the Divine Love and Fatherhood. It is love works a change in the whole character. To give a man a new love is to give him a new heart.

Christ's doctrine of salvation does not say that he suffered the punishment of sin instead of men. It does not say that the sufferings of the cross satisfied the justice of God. It is no doctrine of substitution—the merits of Christ transferred to the sinner, nor guilt of the sinner transferred to Christ. In early Christian times it was thought the sufferings of Christ were the price paid to the devil for man's release. In other ages it was thought they were a price paid to God in discharge of man's debt. All these notions belong to a crude age and an imperfect idea of God and justice. Now we see that justice is only satisfied by men becoming just. To be just is the only satisfaction of Justice, and the incomparable grace of Christ is this—that he makes the evil good, and the false true, and unloving loving, and the unjust just.

The Cross of Christ means much, but only as the crowning point of his life. Christ saves by his life no less than by his death. That was the final act in a great drama of love and sacrifice. "He gave himself" in living as well as in dying. The Cross means that no one has power to bless, and help, and uplift, except at the sacrifice of self.

Consider the new heart. A new affection which changes the inward man. We can and often do come to love that which once we did not care for. Poetry, music. How? By careful *attention* to these things. Mark the full force of attention. So we can win a new love for God and man by attending to it. It is Christ who wins our attention.

The Three Students.

[*From the German.*]

There came three students from over the Rhine,
To a certain good hostel they turned them for wine.

"Ho! Landlady, have you strong wine and beer?
How fareth the Fraulein, your daughter dear?"

"My beer is fresh, and my wine is bright;
My child will be shrouded and buried to-night."

They drew the door of her death-room back,
There she slept in her coffin black:—

The first he lifted the veil from the dead,
And bared his curls, and bended, and said,

"Ah! could'st thou but live again, Maiden, here
From this day forth I would love thee dear!"

The second spread softly the face-cloth again,
And his tears fell fast as the midsummer rain:

"Dead! art thou, Lisbeth? cold, lip and brow!
Ah, God! I learn how I loved thee now!"

But the third in his hand did the little hand take,
And kissed the white forehead, and smiled, and spake:

"I love thee to-day as I loved thee before,
I shall love thee as truly for evermore."

Notes and Jottings.

There were excursions and alarms on the college question in Whit-week. In fact, Mr. Street's paper was devoted chiefly to the question of ministerial training, and not to the far more vital and pressing one of ministerial supply. It is easy to stir the waters of discontent, and to say that we are not satisfied with our colleges; but it appears to us to be a fatal blunder to look to them for the chief cause of any ministerial failure that exists among us. The poor doctor would only be laughed at if he blamed the medical school for his blunders, and the minister must rely upon brain-power, industry, perseverance, to say nothing of the higher religious gifts, as the primary conditions of success.

The fact is that we are in a far too great a hurry. The ministry, like other professions, is one to which men must serve a long apprenticeship. The man fresh from college would be very inhuman, if he had it in him, to be an excellent preacher and pastor from the beginning. He needs practice and experience. It is only after some years that he can speak simply and helpfully out of his own knowledge of life. No more ought to be expected from him than the possibility of growing usefulness in the future, if he uses his opportunities rightly, and is not spoiled by premature success or discouragement. One of the difficulties in a small community is that the ministry does not offer adequate incentives to the average man. It has little of the ambitions of an expanding career about it, and there is generally far too little recognition of the value of experience and a quiet record of hard work.

At the same time, the college question is always with us, and it is right that there should be a demand to make training adequate to modern needs. There has been an enormous change in the educational outlook in other fields, and the theological college should be quick to feel the breath of the new spirit. It is for this reason, and out of no spirit of ignoble jealousy, that it has been urged very strongly that the time has come for a fair and generous discussion of the future relations between Manchester College, Oxford, and the Home Missionary College. It seems unnecessary that they should do precisely the same work, especially if by some differentiation of function, they can serve the churches more adequately. We believe that a period of training in teaching and all the practical side of a minister's work is very much needed, and that this could be taken best after the completion of the theological course. Oxford offers unequalled opportunities for theological learning and intellectual expansion, Manchester is probably unrivalled as a field for practical training. Here at once is an opening for co-operation. The possibility should be at least discussed, and sensible men should not allow even the enthusiasm of a jubilee to blind them to the wider issues of the immediate future.

We notice that the Bishop of Manchester has been addressing a meeting at Lincoln College, Oxford, on the training of the clergy. His remarks are significant owing to the very generous recognition that he gave to the open faculty of theology at Manchester, and the cordiality with which he spoke of Nonconformist co-operation. While deprecating any sinking of essential points of difference or the attempt at closer union by such an expedient as the exchange of pulpits, he laid stress upon the much closer sympathy which must spring up in the common search after truth. He did not know, he said, a more effectual way of Churchmen and Nonconformists getting nearer to one another than a common study and a common work on a common ground. Words like these, which have in them the real spirit of tolerance and goodwill, are of happy augury for the future.

The Government seems to be quite impervious to public opinion upon the Licensing Bill, as upon many other questions. There is no attempt to conciliate opposition or to answer difficulties, and the method in which a measure of such tremendous social import is being forced through the House of Commons at the bidding of a powerful monopoly is a serious menace to popular belief in the fairness of Parliament. Mr. Balfour's attitude to the time limit, and his gratuitous gibe at the clergy, have given the final blow to the pretence that it is meant to be in any sense a temperance measure. The social and political consequences of this magnificent endowment of the drink interest will go deep into the life of the people.

Of all forms of tyranny none is more fatal to democratic institutions than the power of unscrupulous capital, strongly organised for political ends, and dictating to its party the conditions of its support. The English democracy must strike a great blow in self-defence at the next election. The issue is no longer one of party. It is for freedom and morality that we have to fight.

A Character.

I recall the personality of a saintly old lady, the widow of a Baptist minister. She was entirely dependent upon the little she could earn by plain sewing, and a few shillings, the weekly gift of kind-hearted women, for shelter and her daily bread.

I remember, too, that these friends would in turn send her a dinner, ready cooked, on Sundays and sometimes during the week. When quite a girl I was sent to her with parcels of sewing. These visits have left a lasting impression on my mind. She was such a martyr to rheumatism that one wondered how, with her aching back and stiffened limbs, she managed to keep her room so spotlessly clean and tidy.

I generally found her sitting by the window in summer, and by the fire in winter, busily sewing. Hers was a quaint, bundled-up figure in winter. Her room, having a window at either end, was very draughty, so she usually wore sundry woollen wraps to supplement the warmth given by her small fire. She was always bright, cheery, and full of hope and trust; very pleased to have even a child to talk to, and grateful for every little crumb of help. I always went away conscious of a pure atmosphere, and marvelling at her brave courage. To a girl, it seemed terrible to have to live quite alone, with no one to speak to, each day's occupation a repetition of the last. Her bright, happy face, in such dull and monotonous circumstances, was a mystery, and gave constant food for thought to a young mind just beginning to face life's problems. What was the secret of the heavenly air of peace and contentment pervading her room? Out of the fulness of her heart she would give one stray gleam, pointing to the source of light within her. Her religion was her sheet anchor, and it was a very real and ever-present source of strength to her. We can realise something of its power to help, when we try to imagine what her life would have been without it, crippled as she was with rheumatism, confined to her two rooms, with only her thoughts for company. Not many of us could long bear this discipline cheerfully without her source of strength to sustain us, to take us out of ourselves and fill the soul with thoughts of heavenly peace and comfort. No word of hers remains in my memory, but the subtle atmosphere of child-like trust, rest and confidence which pervaded her, and the inward happiness which beamed in her face, will always remain as a beacon, lighting the onward path.

MARGARET A. ROBINSON.

The Lord's Prayer.

It would be an error to suppose that the words of the Lord's Prayer are altogether new, or that they seemed to the disciples of Christ quite different from anything which they had ever heard before. Truth does not descend from heaven like a sacred stone dropped out of another world, concerning which men vainly dispute what it is or whence it came. But it is the good word, the good thought, the good action, which arises in a man's mind; as the Apostle also says, "The word is very nigh unto thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart." The great prophet or teacher draws out what is latent in man, he interrogates their consciences, he finds a witness in them to the best. And, therefore, when we are told that parallels to all the petitions contained in the Lord's Prayer may be found in Rabbinical writers, when we remark that in Seneca and other Gentile philosophers we are exhorted to forgiveness of injuries, when we read in Epictetus the words, "We have all sinned, some more, some less grievously," there is no reason why we should be shocked or surprised at these parallelisms. Neither is the Lord's Prayer less fitted to be the medium of our communion with God because ancient holy men have used several of its petitions before the time of Christ, as all Christians have been in the habit of using them since. Are not all true sayings and all good thoughts, in all times and in all places, the anticipation of a truth which is shining more and more unto the perfect day?

B. JOWETT.

News from the Field.

Although late in the day, a word of congratulation must be uttered on the success of the Whit-week meetings. The various engagements were admirably carried out, as is always the case with anything Mr. Bowie has in hand. The most notable deliverance of the week was that by Professor Wendt, of Jena, on "The Idea of Reality of Revelation." Notwithstanding the strong German accent which made his English somewhat difficult to follow, the Professor was listened to with close attention by a large and appreciative audience. The address was saturated with a deeply religious spirit, and, together with Mr. Wendt's own personality, made a great impression. At the other meetings the relations of the colleges at Oxford and Manchester inevitably cropped up whatever the nominal business in hand. The paper on "The Supply of Students for the Ministry" started the game of leaving the appointed track for this more exciting pursuit, and only at the end of an excited discussion which had nothing whatever to do with the subject announced was Mr. Carpenter able to say a few words to the point. For the life of us we cannot understand why there should be so much angry feeling about a proposal to re-consider our college system as a whole. Individual interests and grateful sentiment are quite secondary considerations in such a matter. That the present go-as-you-please system leads to a great waste of power and resources no one denies. That it should take six professors and a string of occasional lecturers to prepare 14 students for the ministry is absurd. But that so serious a matter cannot be discussed temperately and without importing into it unbrotherly feeling is, to say the least, a great pity.

The amount of £20,000 asked for by the Home Training College leads up to another matter. The Midland Christian Union is appealing for £5000; one of our Northern associations is trying to raise a similar amount, and now comes Norwich with its Martineau memorial, also for £5000. Really, would it not be wise to have some understanding between our various societies as to the order in which appeals should be made? To have half-a-dozen spring upon us within one year is to ensure that all shall suffer. Gentlemen, cannot we form a queue, and present our begging bowls to the public one *after* another instead of all at the same time?

Among ministerial removals and settlements we note that *Mr. Greaves* leaves *Highgate*, that *Mr. Perris* retires from *Little Portland Street*, London, and that *Mr. Priestley Evans* goes from a most successful ministry at *Kidderminster* to *Bury*, Lancashire. Little Portland Street is an almost impossible position, and Mr. Perris has done excellent work there in holding the place together. But is it not just one of those cases in which a little courage and enterprise are required in disposing of the property and building a church with the proceeds in one of London's suburbs? There is too much clinging to bricks and mortar after life and the possibilities of life are flown. We trust *Mr. Perris* will soon meet with a happy settlement. *Mr. Gordon Cooper* has received and accepted an invitation to take charge of the *Mansford Street Mission*. We are glad to see a young enthusiast willing to leave the pleasant West End of London for the very unpleasant East End. Mr. Cooper undertakes a difficult task, but at the same time a task in some ways more interesting than an ordinary pastorate. May he have the success he desires!

We have to record with regret the death of *Mrs. Buckton*, a member of the family so long and intimately connected with Mill Hill Chapel, Leeds. Mrs. Buckton was the first lady-member of the Leeds School Board, and an energetic pioneer in the movement for the more practical education of girls. She was the authoress of several educational books dealing especially with Health, Cooking, Window Gardening, and other matters dealing with the life of the home. In *Mr. J. P. Thomasson*, Bolton has lost one of its most generous and prominent citizens, and the Liberal Faith a most devoted disciple. A successful business man, he never allowed business to absorb him, but resolutely kept the door open for other interests—political, educational, social, and religious. As *Mr. Weatherall* finely put it in a memorial address given at the Bank Street Chapel, Bolton:—"In a day of flourishing and flamboyant materialism he lived and died with an unquenchable belief in an ideal life, in which justice should be the foundation of human intercourse." In the passing away of the *Revs. J. R. Wilson, M.A.*, and *T. R. Elliott* we lose two of our quiet, less known ministers, but who were greatly honoured by their own people and by all who had the privilege of their friendship. Mr. Remington Wilson, who came over to us from the Congregationalists, took charge for some years of our little cause at Blackfriars, Canterbury. He generously undertook the pastorate without fee or stipend. A wealthy man, his gifts were large, but never published to the world. There are many young men who owe much to Mr. Wilson for their educational advantages. *Mr. Elliott* came over to us from the Baptists. Among his fellow-students was Dr. Clifford. For the last 21 years Mr. Elliott found a congenial sphere of labour at Mossley, where he was greatly beloved.

The Seed Sower.

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